

CLAIMS

I Claim:

1. A trailer-stabilizing device extending between a towing vehicle and a fifth-wheel trailer, said trailer-stabilizing device having:

5 an engaged position in which said trailer-stabilizing device operably engages said fifth-wheel trailer and said towing vehicle to apply a dampening force to the trailer,

a disengaged position in which the dampening force is not substantially applied to the fifth-wheel trailer; and,

10 a regulator for commanding the trailer-stabilizing device between said engaged position and said disengaged position.

2. The trailer-stabilizing device of claim 1, wherein said trailer-stabilizing device is secured between the towing vehicle and the fifth-wheel trailer at a position spaced apart from a hitch connecting the towing vehicle to the trailer.

15 3. The trailer-stabilizing device of claim 1, where the trailer has a main cabin, and said dampening force is a substantially downward force applied by the trailer-stabilizing device to the main cabin.

20 4. The trailer-stabilizing device of claim 1, wherein said trailer-stabilizing device includes a linkage extending between said towing vehicle and said trailer.

5. The trailer-stabilizing device of claim 1, wherein said towing vehicle is a pick-up truck and said trailer is a fifth wheel trailer.

25 6. The trailer-stabilizing device of claim 5, wherein said pick-up truck has a rear end with a receiver secured thereto, and said trailer-stabilizing device is detachably secured to said receiver.

30 7. The trailer-stabilizing device of claim 4, wherein said linkage is substantially a four bar linkage.

8. The trailer-stabilizing device of claim 4, wherein said linkage includes:
an arm pivotally secured to a base;
a wheel rotatably secured toward a distal end of said arm; and,
said wheel operably engages a ramp extending from said trailer when said trailer-
5 stabilizing device is in said engaged position.

9. The trailer-stabilizing device of claim 8, wherein said trailer-stabilizing
device is in said engaged position when said towing vehicle and said trailer are traveling
substantially straight.

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10. The trailer-stabilizing device of claim 8, wherein said wheel disengages said
ramp when said trailer is in said disengaged position.

11. The trailer-stabilizing device of claim 10, wherein said trailer-stabilizing
15 device is in said disengaged position when said towing vehicle and said trailer are
turning.

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12. The trailer-stabilizing device of claim 8, wherein said dampening force is
provided by a pneumatic chamber operably secured to said trailer-stabilizing device.

13. The trailer-stabilizing device of claim 12, wherein said pneumatic chamber
is substantially flexible.

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14. The trailer-stabilizing device of claim 12, wherein said pneumatic chamber
is a pneumatic cylinder.

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15. The trailer-stabilizing device of claim 10, wherein said regulator includes a
pressure relief valve that activates when a predefined upper pressure is achieved in the
pneumatic chamber.

16. The trailer-stabilizing device of claim 15, wherein said regulator includes a
manually actuated pressure relief valve.

17. The trailer-stabilizing device of claim 16, wherein:
said manually actuated pressure relief valve has a control handle;
and said towing vehicle has a driver's compartment;
5 and said control handle is positioned within said drivers compartment so that a
driver of the vehicle may activate the control handle from within said driver's
compartment.

18. The trailer-stabilizing device of claim 4, wherein said linkage has a stored
10 position wherein said trailer-stabilizing device does not extend between said towing
vehicle and said trailer.

19. The trailer-stabilizing device of claim 18, wherein linkage is pivotally
secured to said towing vehicle and pivoted upward away from said trailer in said stored
15 position.

20. The trailer-stabilizing device of claim 19, wherein said linkage may be
secured in said stored position.